

Statement for pTTPP

Energy, Infrastructure and Transport Hearing

28 November 2023

My name is Inger Perkins; today I am speaking in my role as Regional Field Advisor for Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa, the Outdoor Access Commission, covering the West Coast region.

The Commission is the Crown agent responsible for providing leadership on outdoor access issues. Our role is to advise on and advocate for free, certain, enduring, and practical access to the outdoors.

As I wrote in our submission,

“Much of our work focuses on modes of active transport, providing advice about public access and promoting unobstructed access where public access is available, and demand exists to use it. We support the creation, maintenance, enhancement and promotion of walking and cycling access, for recreation; for safety, health and wellbeing; for a shift to more sustainable travel; and including for commuting to local destinations such as schools, places of work and shops.

“We support the inclusion of community values and rules that recognise and enable more public access and particularly walking, cycling and other means of active transport. These connect communities and reduce the need to use vehicles.”

With that in mind and regarding Transport Objective 3 the current objective is written as:

TRN-O3: *To enable accessibility, safety and connectivity of land transport infrastructure and consider the amenity of all transport users, including pedestrians and cyclists.*

I would like to reinforce our submission on this objective, which was:

“The focus of the above objective has shifted from that of the exposure draft. It appears to give less importance to pedestrians and cyclists, referring to them in relation to amenity only, rather than accessibility, safety and connectivity.

“We recommend returning to the previous version: “To enable accessibility, safety, connectivity and amenity of all transport users, including pedestrians and cyclists.”

The S42 report at paragraph 535 includes the officer’s opinion that the current version gives adequate importance to pedestrians and cyclists.

Looking at the language, the current version of this objective is divided into two phrases, the first starts “to enable ...” and the second to “consider ...”. The verb *consider* rather than the more pro-active verb *enable* is applied to amenity and this is where pedestrians and cyclists receive special mention.

Amenity values are defined in the RMA as “those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people’s appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes”.

We wish to see an objective where ‘enable’ applies to accessibility, safety, connectivity and amenity, and relates it to all transport users, specifically identifying pedestrians and cyclists among them.

We therefore seek a return to the exposure draft version of this objective.

Should this not be accepted, we support the improved version of ‘provide for’ in place of ‘consider’, which, as the author of the s42 report notes in paragraph 536, gives greater emphasis to active transport.

However, we suggest that *to enable* is a stronger verb than *to provide for* and we prefer and recommend the original version of this objective. It delivers greater support for active transport across the themes of accessibility, safety, connectivity and amenity for our communities.

Thank you.